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# HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE  
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

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SUBJECT: "Tomato Research"...Information from the plant scientists of the United States Department of Agriculture.

If you have tomatoes growing in your garden, chances are you took care to select certain varieties to plant. Possibly you got wilt-resistant tomatoes. Maybe some early producers...or maybe some that produce over a long season. Certainly you wanted kinds that bear lots of fruit...or meaty, tender fruit.

If you have to buy tomatoes, you're most interested in the quality of the fruit -- points like flavor, color, smooth skin...how well the tomatoes have stood up under shipping and handling.

At any rate, whether you grow your own or buy them, you want the tomato to exactly fill your bill. And the plant scientists of the United States Department of Agriculture and the state experiment stations are anxious for you to get it.

Hardly a crop is grown in so many different parts of the country. A tomato that grows successfully in one area won't necessarily thrive in another. Growing conditions and plant pests and diseases are often quite different. That's why the plant breeders work constantly to improve tomato production and quality under different conditions.

Right now, scores of research projects on tomatoes are going on at some three dozen Federal and state experiment stations. The scientists want to develop varieties with skins that don't crack; that have smaller, less fibrous cores; that are resistant to loss of leaves, to drought, to nematodes; varieties that bear early, longer, better during hot weather. Altogether, they're studying about forty different characteristics in the tomato from a breeding standpoint.

Because of similar research work in the past, we're able to get good varieties of tomatoes now. But in the years to come, we can look forward to even better varieties.

